

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, GEE, GW

SUBJECT: GDR GOVERNMENT REACTS STRONGLY TO FORCED ADOPTION CHARGES

1. SUMMARY AN EXERCISE IN EAST BERLIN "DOUBLE-THINK" IS IN THE MAKING AS A RESULT OF WEST GERMAN PRESS CHARGES THAT THE GDR IS APPLYING A POLICY OF "FORCED ADOPTION" FOR THE CHILDREN OF EAST GERMAN COUPLES WHO ATTEMPT TO FLEE TO THE WEST. END SUMMARY

2. AFTER A PERIOD OF SOME DAYS DURING WHICH THE REASON FOR THE "SLANDEROUS ATTACKS" ON THE GDR WAS NEVER MENTIONED IN THE LOCAL PRESS, THE GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY ACKNOWLEDGED IN A STATEMENT PUBLISHED ON PAGE ONE OF NEUES DEUTSCHLAND ON DECEMBER 18 THAT THE "FORCED ADOPTION" CHARGES ARE IN DANGER OF UPSETTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GERMAN STATES, AND THE PROSPECTS FOR A FURTHER
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RELAXATION OF TENSIONS. CHARACTERIZING THE FRG MEDIA

CHARGES AS "UNINHIBITED AND TRUMPED UP" SLANDER, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PREDICTED THAT THE "CAMPAIGN OF CALUMNY" IS BOUND TO FAIL.

3. PREVIOUS REFERENCE TO WHAT WAS A "NON-SUBJECT" IN EAST GERMAN MEDIA BEFORE DECEMBER 18, APPEARED IN SHORT ARTICLES IN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND. ON DECEMBER 16, THE PAPER REPORTED ON ITS INSIDE PAGES THE CANCELLATION OF THE MEETING BETWEEN BAVARIAN MINISTER PRESIDENT GOPPEL AND THE GDR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE IN THE FRG, MICHAEL KOHL, AT THE INITIATIVE OF GOPPEL. ON DECEMBER 17, THIS TIME ON PAGE TWO, ND REPORTED THE DECISION TO EXPEL SPIEGEL CORRESPONDENT METTKE FROM THE GDR. ACCORDING TO ND, THE GOPPEL-HOHL MEETING WAS "PRECIPITATELY" AND UNCEREMONIOUSLY CANCELED USING THE FRG MEDIA CHARGES AS A "PRETEXT". THE SPIEGEL REPORTER HAD ENGAGED IN "GROSS SLANDER" AGAINST THE GDR, ACCORDING TO THE GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT, AND WAS EXPELLED UNDER THE PRESS LAW OF 1973 GOVERNING THE ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN JOURNALISTS. IN NEITHER CASE WAS "FORCED ADOPTION" MENTIONED.

4. COMMENT: THE ESCALATION OF OFFICIAL GDR REACTION TO THESE CHARGES, ALONG WITH CONTINUED ATTENTION TO THIS SUBJECT BY WEST BERLIN AND WEST GERMAN MEDIA, SUGGESTS THAT "FORCED ADOPTION" HAS THE POTENTIAL OF BECOMING A HEATED CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE TWO GERMAN GOVERNMENTS. SHOULD THIS OCCUR, SPILL-OVER EFFECTS UPON OTHER MATTERS, INCLUDING CSCE IMPLEMENTATION, CANNOT BE RULED OUT. SINCE WESTERN RADIO AND TELEVISION ARE WIDELY HEARD AND SEEN IN THE GDR, IT SEEMS THAT THE GDR GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO DEAL MORE SPECIFICALLY WITH THE SPIEGEL ARTICLE THAN IT HAS BEEN WILLING TO DO THUS FAR. TO THE EXTENT THAT THE GDR GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ANY "FORCED ADOPTIONS" HAVE TAKEN PLACE, WE WOULD EXPECT THEM TO ATTEMPT TO SHOW THAT ADOPTION WAS CARRIED OUT ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING, AND NOT AS A POLICY OF RECRIMINATION VISITED UPON REFUGEE, AND WOULD-BE REFUGEE, FAMILIES. GROVE
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